

Lesson Plan Format

The amount of teacher directed instruction is highly related to students' achievement. The teacher effectiveness literature has identified a number of components of an effective instructional lesson. While the components of a lesson vary somewhat across models, they all include elements of review, demonstration and guided practice. The model presented here was designed by Dr. Anita Archer and is particularly appropriate for low achieving students as it incorporates the type of explicit, systematic, teacher-directed instruction from which students benefit.

Overview: Structure of the Lesson

Opening

Attention: Gain attention of the learners
Review: Review relevant past learning
Goal: Communicate the goal(s) of the lesson.

Body

Model: Provide input on the skill.
Prompt: Provide prompted practice.
Check: Provide unprompted practice.

Close

Review: Review the lesson content.
Preview: Preview the content of the next lesson.
Independent Work: Assign homework or seatwork.

Detailed Explanation: Structure of the Lesson

Opening of Lesson

Gain **attention** of the learners. This step is excluded from many models of instruction, however it is critical for low-achieving students. Use a verbal or nonverbal prompt to gain attention. For example, "Look here", "Listen", "Let's begin", or flashing lights, clapping hands, etc.

Review relevant past learning by linking today's lesson with prior knowledge and to ensure the students have the necessary preskills. This can be accomplished by guiding the students in correcting homework or other independent work. An advantage of this for the students is that they receive feedback on their work and can attend to their errors. An

advantage of this behavior for the teacher is that it reduces the time spent in grading papers, so the teacher has additional time for lesson preparation. In addition it allows the teacher to determine if the students have learned the prerequisite skills for today's lesson and to review those preskills if necessary. For example, "Yesterday we began learning about types of sentences. What type of sentence did we learn about yesterday? What type of punctuation goes at the end of that sentence? Let's look over your homework from last night."

Communicating the **goal** of the lesson provides an anticipatory set for the students, directing their attention to the critical lesson content. The goal statement provides a clear direction for both the students and the teacher. The teacher can either tell the students the goal of the lesson (i.e., what is to be learned, what the students will be doing, identify the state standard), or tell the students or involve them in determining the relevance of the specific skill, information or activity (why the skill is important, when it can be used, where it can be applied). Discussing the relevance of the skill increases student motivation **and interest** for learning and promotes generalization. Regardless of how the teacher communicates the goal, it should be brief and needs to use wording the students will understand. For example, "We have been working on writing a topic sentence for a descriptive paragraph. Today we are going to focus on writing the rest of the paragraph." "Where do you think you might be able to use this skill outside of this class?"

Body of Lesson

This is the most important part of the lesson. If the outcome of instruction is a behavior that the students are to perform, this is where it is taught to them. If a lecture and discussion is going to be used, this is the step of the lesson **where** it will be performed.

The **model** step of the lesson is where the teacher provides input on a skill or topic. Anita Archer refers to this step as "I DO IT", because it is what the teacher does. In modeling the skill for the students, it is important to demonstrate **and verbalize** each step in the skill. Make the demonstration very clear. Slow down and exaggerate the steps in the behavior so the students will attend to the critical features. Tell the students what is being done using clear language to define the behaviors the students are to exhibit. If a more difficult skill is being taught, ask the students questions to verify understanding and to increase attention. For example, "Watch and listen to me as I do this problem". It is sometimes necessary to repeat the demonstration. If this step is to be a lecture by the teacher, care should be taken to maintain an appropriate pace and attention by all. **If the purpose of the lesson is to lecture or lead a discussion, the model step is where the teacher presents the content of the lecture.**

After modeling the skill, it is necessary to provide prompted practice of the skill. During the **prompt** step, the teacher guides the students in performing the behavior. The purpose of prompted practice is to reduce errors. Since this step involves practicing the skill with the students, Archer calls this step, "WE DO IT". There are two ways to prompt students. Prompt the behavior by doing it at the same time as the students, or verbally prompt the

students as they perform the behaviors. For example, "Read the words with me". "What do we do first?" It is important to keep the wording consistent throughout the prompt, using the same wording as used in the model. The teacher carefully monitors the students' responses during the prompt and provides corrective feedback when needed. In some cases, the amount of guidance given in the prompt can be gradually faded. Continue the prompted practice until students have demonstrated a high level of proficiency. *If this is a lecture, this is the step where the teacher will lead a discussion about the content of the lesson, asking questions and providing feedback to lead the discussion.*

The purpose of the **check** step is to verify the student understanding and to ensure a high level of proficiency before independent work is assigned. The check should not be confused with independent work. The check is always completed during instruction so that the teacher is available to provide corrective feedback. Because the students will be performing the behavior under the teacher's supervision with no prompting, it is sometimes referred to as "YOU DO IT". During the unprompted practice the teacher monitors the behaviors of the students and provides feedback as necessary. Continue until students are consistently responding correctly. Example of unprompted practice might include, "Complete the next problem by yourself." "When you are finished look up.", "Get ready to read the list of words to your partner". *If this lesson is a discussion, this is the point where the teacher will ask the students to paraphrase what has been discussed or use the ideas from the discussion in an original way.*

Closing the Lesson

The first step to end the lesson is to **review** the skill, *strategy or information* that was taught or discussed. It is important to close with this step to help the students understand that the lesson is coming to a close and for transition purposes. The teacher might ask for example, "Who can tell me what we just learned?" or "What did we just discuss?"

The second step in the close is to **preview** the skill, *strategy or information* that will be covered in the next lesson. This provides a connection between the current lesson and the next day's work. This can be as simple as saying "Tomorrow we will learn about another kind of sentence", or "We will continue this discussion tomorrow".

Finally, the teacher provides the **independent work**, seatwork, or homework. *Independent work should focus on skills that the students have been taught and have demonstrated a level of proficiency on during instruction.* It is important to explain the assignment and insure everyone understands what is being required and when it is due. Examples might be, "Please continue doing the rest of the problems on page 100 and turn it in when you are finished", or "Your homework is to write 2 examples of each type of sentence we have discussed", or "Identify 2 new facts you learned from the lecture today". Sometimes independent work is not given on a skill that is currently being taught. In some cases independent work will lag behind the introduction of new skills.

Structure of the Lesson

Opening

Attention
Review
Goal

Body

Model (I DO IT)
Prompt (WE DO IT)
Check (YOU DO IT)

Close

Review
Preview
Independent Work